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CONSIDERATIONS

UPON THE

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AND

AMERICAN WAR.

IN A

L E T T E R

TO A

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT,

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. ALMON, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON
HOUSE, PICCADILLY. MDCCLXXIX.

[Price One Shilling.]

CONSIDERATIONS

M. R. L. M. G. H.

AMERICAN WAR



MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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LONDON
PRINTED BY J. ALLEN, 10, NEW STREET, LONDON.
(The City of London)

CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

DEAR SIR,

IN the beginning of our unfortunate contest with America, I took the liberty to lay before you my opinion of its event. What I said at that time upon the subject, was with a view to discourage the partisans of coercion from a perseverance in their plan; and, if they had followed my advice, I flatter myself, they would have had no reason to repent of it. It has been a matter of real concern to me, as well as to many of the advocates for peace, to see these sanguinary projects still persisted in. As I still continue to see them in the same light as at first, I shall, for the ease of my conscience, and in hopes of being of some service to this country, urge such farther reasons against the continuation of the war, as policy, reason, and justice, have suggested

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to me. I am obliged, upon this occasion, to recur to my principle, and to repeat in a few words, what I have always insisted upon, that the dispute, on our side, is founded in injustice.

It is well known, that having for a long time monopolized the American trade, we extended our claim to tax the Colonies; that upon this they petitioned, and remonstrated; and that their petitions and remonstrances being unheard, or unattended to, and even unanswered, they had recourse at length to *resistance*; they considered the compact between themselves and the mother country as dissolved, and renounced their allegiance to that power by which they were no longer protected.

This measure has been called a rebellion by some, who ought to have been more moderate in their expressions; for my part, I consider it merely as a secession of one part of the people, from the domination of the other.

The object which the Ministry have in view is, to bring back these people, conditionally, or unconditionally, to their dependence

pendence upon this country. The wisdom, the policy, the necessity of this measure, I purpose to examine (setting aside, as the American Minister has done, the justice or injustice of it) but before I proceed in this business, I beg leave to premise, that not being an author by profession, my arguments will not, probably, be arranged and methodized to the greatest advantage; but I shall say, first or last, all that occurs to me upon the subject, and hope to be excused, if I am sometimes guilty of repetition.

It may not be amiss, if at the same time I produce my own arguments, I hazard some objection to those of an honourable gentleman, who is lately returned from America, and who having long been a strenuous assertor of the rights of mankind in general, and our late fellow subjects in particular, has, all at once, to the surprize and mortification of his friends, and the exultation of his enemies, become an advocate for the measures of government.

This gentleman, in a speech lately delivered in the House of Commons, asserts,

that “ *All men will now confess the Americans have a bad and wicked cause ; that they have no just object to contend for, being now united with France, for the professed purpose of reducing this country ; that all good men ought to join most heartily to oppose them.*”

As one assertion without proof, is as good as another, I shall beg leave to reply, that the Americans having been first attacked, are justified by all laws, human and divine, in having defended themselves, and to have acted otherwise, they would have acted weakly, if not wickedly. The objects they originally contended for, are their liberty, and their property ; neither of which can be safe whilst a British fleet is upon their coasts, and a British army in their country. Their alliance with France is evidently founded upon self-preservation. How could they balance between the foe, who was burning, murdering, and destroying, and the friend who stretched out a helping hand for their salvation ? Could we, could any nation in the world, place any confidence in these people, or trust to any future treaty
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with them; if, as the first act of their political existence, they should renounce a solemn treaty entered into with a friend who succours them in distress? Must every good man be the enemy of a people who act upon such principles? I am thoroughly persuaded, that all good men will not unite to oppose such people; and I am as well satisfied, that all the bad men of this country will never be able to subdue them.

The gentleman thinks, that neither our *want of resources*, nor the *strength of the Americans* can *prevent our success*; sure he is not serious. Are our resources more abundant than before we had thrown away thirty millions, in three fruitless campaigns? or are the Americans weaker since the whole power of France has been thrown into their scale? *One set of men, he says, have lost the confidence of the people, by mismanagement*; I suppose he means by the mismanagement of the war; but of this I entirely acquit them. I do not think that any set of men could have prosecuted any plan with more determined acrimony, and I do not think it is owing to the weakness of their heads,
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or the goodness of their hearts, that they have now a single enemy in America. They have lost the confidence of the people, by having plunged them into all the horrors of a civil war; a war, which, if we may judge of the future by the past, can never be successful, notwithstanding the affected contempt of the strength of the Americans. Another set of men, he says, *want to yield up all that is worth contending for.* This is a most unwarrantable assertion with regard to the very respectable Minority in both Houses of Parliament. I believe I shall not be disavowed when I maintain, that there is not a man of them who is disposed to give up any territory of which we are in possession. With regard to the continent of America, it is a joke to talk about yielding it up; we might as well talk of yielding up Spain, because we are in possession of Gibraltar; or surrendering France, because we have a garrison at Jersey and Guernsey. Every body knows, that beyond the range of our cannon, we do not possess a foot of ground from Nova Scotia to Florida. Let us see then what we actually possess,

possess, and what I am satisfied we may continue to possess, unmolested by America, or any power in Europe. We have Canada, Hudson's Bay, Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland; an absolute monopoly of the fur trade, and more fish than we could catch these hundred years, though we were all to turn fishermen to-morrow: we have more trees to cut down, more acres to cultivate, more lumber, more pitch, tar, rosin, than our latest posterity can ever see the end of: we possess all that France possessed before the last war, besides Nova Scotia and the two Floridas; and the French, though admitted to a share of the American trade, possess nothing in North America; they have not a single fortress in the country; the Americans, oppressed and injured as they have been, are still the sons of Englishmen; they are still, what their gallant ancestors long were, a brave, a free, and an unconquered people. How long will men be carried away with the notion that those who have not all, can keep nothing? The world is wide, and with peace and industry people may live, though they should

should not have more extensive dominions than they know how to govern. France, who twenty years ago lost Canada, and all her possessions in North America, still exists as a respectable power, with a flourishing trade, and a formidable navy; and they might have said with as much reason, at the conclusion of last peace, that we should kill them, because they had not killed us, as any man could advance that inhuman position at the beginning of the present war.

With regard to the treaty with France, it has been said that *it has not been constitutionally ratified*; and this leads me to say a word or two about the Congress, who have been so cavalierly treated in a late eloquent oration. If these people be what they are represented, it follows, that half a million of free men, with arms in their hands, have chosen and employed fifty or sixty of the most worthless and profligate among them, to trample upon their liberties, to rob them of their properties, and exercise the very tyranny they are up in arms to oppose; and what is still more extraordinary, that these people should be annually re-elected, without power

power to compel, or money to bribe their constituents to so glaring an absurdity; (for I do not find that these ambitious Delegates have as yet given themselves a power to sit for seven years, as our virtuous and immaculate Parliaments have done on this side the water). This may be true, but is to me absolutely inconceivable; and I heartily wish the Gentleman had been permitted to *visit the country, and make acquaintance with the illustrious characters* it has produced; he might then, perhaps, have obtained better information than the inhabitants of Philadelphia, or the prisoners in the gaol, could give him; and instead of anarchy and tyranny, he might have seen that, he will in vain look for at home, a fair and equal representation of the people, enjoying that plenitude of power, which a wise, a moderate, and a disinterested exercise of it can alone secure, in a free and uncorrupted country. To suppose *that they would not recede* from their treaty with France without *strong exertions* on our part, is certainly paying them a compliment; but that *force should accompany concession*, and

terms offered with the bayonet at their throats, affords a strong presumption that such terms were either repugnant to their interest, or that we knew, that, circumstanced as they were, they could not accept them with honour.

I have nothing to say against the Gentleman's plan for regimenting the Canadians and Americans; if, indeed, Frenchmen and Americans can be found to be regimented in the service of the Ministry, against France and America, the measure is perfectly consistent with that of coercion; I would only recommend, for the honour of the army, that the negroes and Indians should be regimented at the same time, and obtain an act of naturalization in their favour for the same meritorious purpose.

If two thirds of the people of North America wish to return to their connection with Great Britain, in God's name what hinders them? They are all in arms; they all have votes in the election; and if there is any truth in arithmetic, in war and in politics, two to one are odds as well as at football. For breaches of faith
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and violation of solemn agreements, the Congress have, I presume, given at least plausible reasons. We have this obligation to them, however, that they have not retaliated upon us the treatment of Colonel Allen; that they have not obliged their prisoners to fight against their country, and have not sent them to despair and die, far from their friends, their families, and their country, in the East and West-Indies, and upon the more unwholesome coast of Africa. It becomes us, indeed, to talk of chicane, who have observed for three years past no other law than that of the strongest, and who have left no other alternative to our late fellow-subjects than death or ruin, or unconditional submission.

I now come to a part of the Gentleman's speech, which I think deserving of the most rigorous animadversion. He says, it was *ten to one that Admiral Keppel, with so superior a force, would have destroyed half, or the greatest part of the French fleet*. I wish to God the officers of *this* country would leave gasconading to the inhabitants of *that* where the Garonne flows, and not invade the pri-

vilege of their neighbours. I wish too that he would be persuaded by his own reason, if a thousand instances have not taught it him, that an Englishman, or even a Scotchman, opposed against a Frenchman, is but a man; that one gun and one ship is as good as another; and that, however necessary it may be to delude the forecastle with such an idea, whenever the fate of this country shall depend upon the event, it will be the height of temerity to suppose, that with equal numbers, or with one or two more, the advantage will be on our side in the proportion of *ten to one*.

I believe I have answered above, in speaking of the Congress, the article about the *mock Parliament*, and *Committees of Major-Generals*. I see the Gentleman alludes to the times of Cromwell; but the circumstances differ widely; where all are soldiers, and all are armed, it is natural to suppose that sense and valour will take the lead, and Major-Generals are more likely to be at the head of a Committee, than those of inferior rank, talents, and abilities; but in this Committee, which, like every other part of the republic, is *elective*, there is a Polish Veto
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by the side of every Member, which, if reason and argument should fail, would be ready to assert the rights of the republic.

Under the article of *probable events*, we are certainly more indebted to fortune than France or America; and it is evidently owing to chance alone that our fleet and army escaped from Philadelphia; that they were neither starved nor taken at New-York; and that the garrison of Rhode-Island had not suffered the same fate as the men of war and transports. But we must *resolve to persevere*, and to *die in the last ditch*, says this new advocate for bloodshed and battery. If we are ever drove to the last ditch, I think it will be by such violent Councils; in the mean time, I think there would be no harm in asking the gracious Congress, as he calls them, whether they, and their new ally, will leave us in quiet possession of what we now possess? Or, if this pill is too bitter, suppose we ask the question of France, by the mediation of Count Almodavar? For if there is to be no peace in Israel, till we have conquered France, and Spain, and America, we have a stone to roll

roll upwards, which, like that of Sifiphus, must needs recoil and overwhelm us; and those, who are ambitious of such an honour, will soon find an opportunity of dying in a ditch.

Before I reply to any more of this gentleman's arguments, I must beg leave to observe, that the nature of the war is now changed, and that we are in every part of the world entirely upon the defensive. It is not necessary to be a soldier, to know the disadvantages of such a war; every body must know that the enemy will strike, where, and when, he pleases; and that you will not know where, or when, he will strike. In the first place, I will mention what places you have to garrison and defend: In North America, Newfoundland, the forts in Hudson's Bay, Quebec, and the inland forts dependent upon it; Halifax, Annapolis, Fort Cumberland, and the smaller dependent ports in Nova Scotia; Rhode Island, New York, Long and Staten Islands, St. Augustine, Pensacola. In the West-Indies, Barbadoes, Tobago, St. Vincent's, Antigua, St. Christopher's, Montserrat,

Montserrat, and Jamaica. In Africa, Senegal, and other forts. In India, Bencoolen, Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, with all the dependent forts and factories. In the Mediterranean, Gibraltar, and Minorca; Ireland, with Jersey and Guernsey; and lastly, the vital parts, Britain herself. In all these places we are chained like a bear at the stake, without knowing at which we are to be baited. We ought to thank God, that we have not an army and a garrison in every one of the Thirteen United States; which we certainly must have, if we are so unfortunate as to conquer them: In what a multitude of places should we be vulnerable; and how weak must we be in each place. After the head-roll of garrisons I have mentioned, I fancy no man will pretend to say, we can send an army to attack any part of the dominions of our enemies; for, besides the troops that will be necessary to occupy all these posts, there must be upon the defensive plan, a squadron of ships in North America; another in the West-Indies; a third in the East-Indies; a fourth in the Mediterranean; besides a fifth, superior to what France and Spain can muster, for

Channel

Channel service ; not to mention the numerous convoys that will be necessary to protect your trade, and a frigate to windward and to leeward of every port in America. Are we equal to all these efforts ? And must we destroy ourselves in making them for the worst of all purposes, the conquest of our countrymen ? I see nothing like a *carte blanche* to France in the Independence of America ; America has till now been in our possession, and yet we have not hitherto given the law to France ; why then should France, who is *not* in possession of America (and I trust never will be) give the law to us ? It is true she claims a free trade with a free people ; but she has declared, it is not an exclusive one ; and, indeed, from the very nature of the country, it is almost impossible it should be so ; besides, it is the interest of the Americans to trade with all the world, and all the world are interested in keeping open her trade.

I come now to what has been said about our army in America ; that they were *confident of victory*, and that they desired nothing but to be *led against the enemy*. I will not dispute but that this language

language may have been held by those who knew where it would be agreeable, and that there may be men in this army, as in all others, who would sacrifice their honour and conscience for pay and promotion; but from all the letters I have seen, and all the accounts I have heard, I am persuaded that the English army is averse to the American war, not only in its principle, but the mode of carrying it on; and that they regard it as the grave of their past, and the insuperable obstacle to their future glory. But to judge of this question, says the Commissioner, *we must know the disposition of Holland, the Northern Powers, Portugal, and Spain, the resources of this country, as well as the difficulties to encounter in America.*

To these points I can only offer conjectures, which appear to me to be founded on reason. With regard to Holland, you have already shewed her what you would do, if you dared. You have attempted to shackle her trade with every power with whom you shall be at war; and as you are so situated as to command the navigation of the channel, whilst you are

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the strongest, she must needs with a diminution of your power, as the only probable check to your overbearing insolence; she will not be *for* you for that reason, and if you meddle with her, she will be *against* you. As to the Northern Powers, it certainly is not their interest that you should get a barrel of tar, or pitch, or a mast, or a yard, or a spar, or a shingle, or a pipe-stave, or, in short, one single article of naval stores or lumber from America. These are the staples of their country, and there you must go to market for them, when you cannot get them elsewhere, and you cannot get them elsewhere, except in America; and if you are in possession of America, you can get them from thence; and if you are the masters at sea, you may not only get your own naval stores, &c. from thence, but you may prevent every southern power in Europe from getting naval stores, either from America or the Baltic; and thus become the great tyrannical, commercial monopolist of Europe. The northern powers are too enlightened to suffer this. Portugal produces very good Port wine, which

no nation in Europe, except England, will either purchase or drink. Their oranges and lemons too find a market here, and are a drug every where else ; you may, therefore, expect a peace with Portugal. She will be neutral, unless France and Spain bid her call upon you for an army and a subsidy, to carry on a mock war upon her frontiers, as you did some years ago, to no manner of purpose, but to exhaust and weaken yourselves. Spain is now a respectable maritime power, and the Spaniards are an honourable people : they are bound by treaty to assist the French with ten sail of the line and twenty thousand land forces. It cannot be doubted but that they will fulfil their engagements, and what such a force will be in the scale against you, for ever compleated and recruited, whatever they may suffer, employed here or there, as times or contingencies may require, I need not say ; but setting her engagements aside, can it be supposed by any man in his senses, that Spain will stand by an idle spectator, and see the naval power of France annihilated, (the only means by which you can

conquer America) when from that epoch she must hold Peru and Mexico under the good pleasure of Great Britain, without any other security than your moderation. It must be with very different views to her own security, that she has equipped a fleet of sixty sail of the line and thirty frigates; the French have sixty-seven sail of the line and forty-five frigates. If mutual interests, alliance, and sound policy, should ever combine these formidable fleets, we must not expect to conquer them with rhodomontades of *ten to one*. I am not acquainted with the resources of France; I should suppose they were assisted by the treasures of Spain; I am assured, at least, that they borrow money at five per cent. whilst we pay more than seven; and if the landholder, the stockholder, the merchant, and the manufacturer are consulted, I believe there will be found more embarrassment in our finances, and less ability, as well as less inclination, to carry on a war than at any period since we were a nation.

Is it really necessary at this time to dwell upon the *difficulties we are to encounter in America?*

America? Can there be a greater proof of their existence, than that with sixty-three thousand land forces, with twenty-two thousand seamen, and near a hundred men of war, you have not surmounted them; that in this fatal conflict with your late fellow-subjects, you have already lost above twenty thousand of our land forces, besides between five and six thousand taken prisoners; near five thousand seamen, and several men of war, even before France had appeared in the quarrel.

In the first place, I think it an exertion absolutely beyond our strength to put General Clinton at the head of 25,000 men, after providing for the security of the several posts at present in our possession. Attacked in all our dependencies, an invasion hanging over our heads, can we send another fleet and another army to America? (for we cannot send an army without a fleet to convoy them) can we, I say, so totally dismantle our own country, in hopes to recover another irrecoverably lost? But for the sake of argument, let us suppose (as the Gentleman desires) that Sir Henry Clinton can take the
field

field with five and twenty thousand men, which way will he turn himself? He cannot move up the North River beyond the highlands. It is impracticable; both the Ministry and their Generals know it to be so, though they do not know above half the difficulties; it remains then to march, or to sail, to the East or to the West. Will he advance through the Jerseys with less difficulty than he retreated? Will he cross the Delaware in the face of an enemy, as Alexander passed the Granicus? Or will he attempt the navigation of the Delaware, the passage of the chevaux de frize, and the attack of Mud Island? He will not find them more defenceless than they were before French frigates and French engineers had found their way there. Will he return to Chesapeak Bay, march to Philadelphia by the route which Sir William Howe has traced out for him, and carry provisions enough to subsist his army when he arrives there? And when he does arrive there, will he leave a good garrison in the place, and conduct his army, his magazines, and his hospitals, towards the Alleghenny Mountains

tains and the River Ohio? Or will he sit down contented with the possession of this city, which we are told ought never to have been evacuated? I throw out these questions for the choice of those who choose to meddle with them, declaring that I see no prospect of advantage in any one step I have been speaking of.

To sail up the different rivers in Virginia, to be pelted from every point, without finding a town to burn, or an army to conquer, is certainly an employment quite unworthy of a British fleet and a British army; and there remains only to try once more our luck at Sullivan's Island and Carolina. Whether the French have levelled the fortifications there, or strengthened them with additional works; whether the inhabitants will oppose you, or desire you to land, in order to protect them from themselves, is more than I can pretend to determine, and must therefore leave it to Sir Henry Clinton and the Gazette to inform us; I mean if he goes there a second time.

Let us now suppose that we have conquered the south west provinces, and
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placed garrisons in our conquests, or that we have been baffled in the attempt, as we have hitherto been, or that we have made no attempt upon them (which would be better than either). Let us turn our eyes and our forces to the north-eastward: what shall we be able to do in that quarter? I think we shall be able to burn the remainder of the houses at Bedford; and, if the enemy is not beforehand with us, perhaps we shall get all the sheep we have left upon Martha's vineyard; nay, we may burn the privateers at New London; but this will not finish the war. Before that business is done, you must disarm Connecticut, and you must take Boston; before, therefore, you land in Connecticut, and march into that country from New-York, whether it be with the remains of a victorious army, or the entire unbroken number of 25,000, I would recommend it to the consideration of the General who commands them, that there are in Connecticut alone 40,000 men bearing arms, supported on one side by the province of New-York, where there are more than 30,000, and on the other by Providence, where there are 14,000 more,
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whether it be adviseable to conquer these people, *en passant*, or to proceed strait to Boston, the General's discretion must determine; however, when he comes before Boston, (to get there is *his* affair) he may expect to find a very formidable army upon his hands, and a town by no means defenceless. By the last muster of the Massachusetts militia, they amounted to 89,000, and those of their neighbours, in New Hampshire, to 18,000; when the tar-barrel is set on fire upon Beacon-Hill, at Boston, all these fellows begin their march, with sixty rounds of powder and ball, a musquet upon their shoulders, a week's provisions, a blanket, and a Bible, at their backs; all covenanted to one another, and all sworn to obey their own Assembly and their Congress. Half of this number can be assembled at Boston in eight and forty hours, and the whole in twice that time.

In the war before last, when Duke D'Anville's squadron was expected at Boston, the whole country was upon the march, and 10,000 men had actually reached Boston (in less than twenty-four hours, as I have

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been

been informed) before it was found to have been a false alarm. Indeed, the late blockade, and consequent evacuation of Boston, after our victory at Bunker's Hill, are the best proofs of the numbers that New England can bring together. Whether it is probable that General Clinton will defeat such an army, and afterwards take the town of Boston, I leave to the judgment of gentlemen of the profession. But it is said, to encourage us, that the *greater exertions* we make ourselves, the *more we shall be respected by others*. Now it is my opinion, and I flatter myself I am not singular, that the more we exert ourselves in this quarrel, the more odious we shall make ourselves, and the more enemies we shall bring upon our backs; we have seen the war carried on against us, with the applause of all Europe. To this, France has now added an open and declared assistance; and sees, for the first time perhaps, her own ambition, and the interests of mankind walk hand in hand.

It will be asked, how we are to put an end to this war: I reply, as wars are generally terminated. Treat with the Americans, or
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let them alone; do any thing with them, but burn their houses, and cut their throats; withdraw your fleets and armies, exchange your prisoners, keep the territory of which you are still in possession, and be thankful that you have not lost it. As to the *miserable inhabitants who have adhered to your cause*, I would have their errors, or even their crimes, forgotten; and nothing remembered but their misfortunes. They have hitherto been greatly assisted by the munificence of Parliament, and I wish they may continue to experience the same liberality: let them have allotments of our waste lands; let them be provided with money to begin the world again; and let them be in this, as they were in their own country, industrious planters. But there are likewise a much more considerable number of miserable inhabitants, who, instead of deserting, have adhered to the cause of their country; I mean the Americans, whose ships we have taken, whose houses we have burnt, and who are the surviving witnesses of their own ruin, and that of their families. As the wreck and plunder of

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these

these people's fortune has been divided amongst the officers and sailors of the fleet, and must center in this country, perhaps they may not be thought unworthy of some retribution from the hands of Parliament. The widows and orphans, particularly of those who have fallen in their own defence, it may be hoped will, in the hour of reflection, be considered by this humane and benevolent country. Suppose, as an expiation of our sins, and upon the very back of the Fast, we should vote the nine millions intended for future mischief, as an indemnification for the past. If I had the honour to sit in the House of Lords, I declare I would make this motion, not that I think that the place in which a Money Bill should originate, but because I am confident it would go down to the House of Commons, most effectually seconded and enforced by the vote of the whole bench of Bishops.

I must now speak a word as to the *divisions* supposed to subsist in America. There certainly have been two parties there as there are here, for and against the Ministry; but I do not hesitate to assert, that the latter predominate,

minate, not in the proportion of ten to one, but *all to nothing*. Our violent measures have provoked what we threatened; the Americans have proscribed, and banished as their enemies, all those who are not their professed and sworn friends; they have not, destined them to the cord, nor robbed them of their property, (a degree of lenity which they have not learned from us) but they have obliged them either to take the oaths to the Government under which they live, or to withdraw, *with their effects*, in sixty days; and, in case of return, to suffer death. What division there can remain in America, favourable to Ministry, after the execution of this decree, I leave to an honourable Commissioner to explain to the House of Commons. The divisions in the British House of Commons are, indeed, alarming; nor will they be otherwise until corruption is abolished, and the Members are at liberty to vote and to act with the same freedom with which they think.

I shall conclude my observations upon this celebrated speech with the retort courteous. I think the *ambition* of the Congress

gress is perfectly consonant *to the interests of the people they govern*, because it is inconceivable that they should otherwise be able to govern them at all; and I think the riot at Boston (if there was any) must have been a drunken quarrel amongst a parcel of sailors, disavowed and suppressed by Government, or, what is the same thing in New England, *the people themselves*. It may with much more propriety be asserted, that the dissenting voice of the people has invariably reprobated the measures of Government in this country, from the very beginning to this disastrous period of the American war.

I shall now beg leave to remark a few of the inconveniences which result from this defensive war. In the first place, you are obliged to detach six thousand men to defend the West-Indies, which, in your extreme hurry to conquer North America, you had probably forgot to have been left defenceless. Whether this detachment, divided amongst all your islands, or collected in one of them, will answer the purpose for which they were sent, I leave to General Grant and
Count

Count D'Estaing to settle between them. The French, in the mean time, have conquered one, if not more, of your islands; and nothing can prevent the conquering the rest, but the timely interposition of Admiral Byron, who for this purpose must leave the coast of North America, and every port there, open to whatever ships and troops the French think proper to send to the assistance of their allies. The ships under Commodore Rowley, which lately sailed, cannot arrive in time to be of any service; and if Admiral Byron should be to leeward of Antigua, which he may possibly be, Mr. Rowley and his convoy may be in great danger of falling into the hands of Count D'Estaing. Whether the Spanish ships and forces are to act in the West-Indies, is a question I cannot determine. I should suppose they would. The Spaniards from Cartagena, and the French from Cape Francois, may act in concert against the Island of Jamaica, which might be safe, if a brave and intelligent officer could secure it; but Colonel Dalling has no force to oppose to what may be brought against him; and whilst
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our West-India islands are thus exposed to insult, whilst we are hastening from all parts to relieve them, I beg it may be remembered from whence we draw the succour, late as it may prove ; from America (I repeat it) in the first place, where we leave a weakened, a disheartened, and a defensive army on our own side ; an encreasing army on the side of the Americans, encouraged to act upon the offensive, as well by the detachment from our army as the departure of our fleet, and perhaps upon the eve of seeing a navy of their own. For I suppose the Ministry are not now to be informed, that D'Estaing's fleet carried over sails, and stores, and rigging, for near an hundred frigates ; that the Americans are moving Heaven and Earth to encrease their marine during the winter ; and that before the spring you may expect from every port, and every creek, a swarm of cruizers, ready to infest your trade, and protect their own, to favour the motions of their own troops, and obstruct those of their enemies. For these advantages they are already obliged to the

the diversion, which the French have made for them, in the West-Indies.

What I have advanced will not appear chimerical to those who are conversant in ship-building; they know well that a frigate can be raised, from the keel to the gunwale, in less than six weeks; and, as in every province of America, there are trees and axes, and ship-builders in abundance, with a multitude of rivers and harbours, proper for the construction and launching of ships, and where the timber grows upon the very spot where it is to be put together, surely I do not advance a paradox in asserting, that, under favour of their alliance, they must and will have a marine; a marine that may hereafter be friendly, even to us, if we do not vainly attempt to tread upon and to crush it. These exertions, on their part, are the necessary and certain consequences of that unremitting acrimony with which we are pushing on the war against them; we are provoking the very extremities we threaten. Let any one cast his eye round our territories, and see in how many places we are vulnerable; let the naked coasts of

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Britain and Ireland declare how open we are to the devastations of an enemy ; there is scarce a great town contiguous to the coast, that might not be burnt and plundered by a handful of men. The militia, indeed, are a respectable body, though I cannot compliment them so far, as to suppose them superior to a French army ; but they are wholly employed between France and the capital: What is to become of the rest of the kingdom in case of a descent ? Are Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Norwich, Newcastle, Exeter, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, to be sacrificed, because a violent Minister chuses to sack and burn the coasts of America, and wreak his disappointed vengeance upon the naked towns ; because his Generals and his army have not been able to conquer the troops in the field ? But the West-India islands are the most exposed to be the victims of this predatory war, to which we have challenged our enemies ; nothing can be more defenceless than they are in all respects ; a few shopkeepers in the towns, in the country, the owner of the plantation

tion and his overseer. What sort of a militia these will make, and with what convenience they can be collected, I leave any one to judge. The few troops they have amongst them (admitting that Grant arrives) must be thrown into their forts, with a view, if possible, to protect the harbours, (though I much question if they will be equal to their defence) but be that as it may, there is not one of our islands upon which a landing may not be effected, without either danger or difficulty; in such a case, the Negroes, and whatever is of any value upon the plantations, are at the mercy of an enemy. I aver, that nothing but a superior fleet in the West-Indies, or a very large body of troops distributed amongst the islands, can prevent your possessions from being swept away.

If the Marquis de Bouillé chuses to continue his tour, there is nothing to stop him, from Barbadoes to Jamaica; and all this mischief may have happened, whilst you are persisting to take a bull by the horns in North America; a method of proceeding, which does some honour to the

hearts of your soldiers, but very little to the heads of your Ministers.

It is, however, some comfort to those who wish to defend their own country, rather than to invade America, that the 14,000 men devoted to this slaughter-house are not yet raised, or likely to be raised; that the militia cannot be sent there; and that the few regiments of regulars remaining amongst us cannot be parted with, but at the risk of the Minister's head; which I heartily wish, both for his own sake, and that of his country, may never be forfeited.

How stand our affairs in Africa? Small demand, I fancy, for Birmingham guns, or Liverpool gun-powder; the misfortune is, that we make use of those commodities in shooting one another. The slave trade to the West-Indies, I believe, is at an end, unless we mean to supply the French. We need not import them into this country, we have but too many of that *complexion* already. The Levant trade too, I should suppose, might labour under some little interruption. I do not find that a squadron is ordered upon the Mediterranean service;

service; we are bound by treaty to Spain not to send more than a single sixty-gun ship into the Mediterranean, and I fancy, as matters stand, we shall as soon take a bear by the tooth as infringe an iota of that treaty.

What invaluable possessions then are Gibraltar and Minorca, Port Mahon, and the Mole at Gibraltar; a safe asylum for Admiral Mann, and two or three frigates. I understand that a squadron is destined for the protection of our settlements in the East-Indies, where, at present, we have only two ships of the line, and two or three frigates. This great branch of our commerce seems to have been neglected in the same manner as the West-Indies. The favourite project, the conquest of America, seems to have absorbed every other concern. Before Sir Edward Hughes arrives in the East-Indies, it is highly probable we may have little left there to protect. The French have been long accumulating a force at the Mauritius. Their plan is to attack our settlements, or else, as an Honourable Gentleman asserted in the House of Commons, they

have no plan at all. Perhaps, we rely upon the affection of the country powers for our defence. I wish, for the honour of the nation, we had any claim to their assistance and support; but the injustice and oppression of our Government has been such, that so far from being entitled to their affection or esteem, we are become the objects of their hatred and detestation.

How melancholy is the consideration to the friends of their country, that in the East and in the West, in Asia and in America, the name of an Englishman is become a reproach. In Europe we are not loved enough to have a single friend; from such a situation there is but a step to hatred or contempt. But to return for a moment to our own country, (about which I am not less anxious than for our dependencies) I think we are in danger every where, and most so where we are least prepared against it. Lord Amherst, the Fabius of our times, (who resembles the Roman in every thing but his delay) will, it is true, throw himself and the militia between the capital and
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the French; and if Generalship only was in question, whether our enemy was commanded by Hannibal or by Broglie, the event would not be doubtful. But our constitutional army is but green, though their General is grey; and a militia (though the best in *Europe*) is not infallible against an army of veterans. A kingdom is at stake, and the odds are against the defendants. But of all parts of the kingdom, I suppose Newcastle and Shields to be in the most danger.

It is well known to many people in this country, that part of Mr. Broglie's plan, in his intended invasion of this country, is to hazard 7 or 8000 men at Newcastle. I address myself to the coal owners, to the ship owners, and to the pot boilers, of London and fifty other places, and ask them, what extreme desolation such a force landed in the North must occasion? (For that they might and would land is certain, though Lord Percy, or Hannibal himself, was at the head of two battalions of militia to oppose them). I say, I leave all these sufferers to declare what effects the destruction

tion of their waggon ways and engines, the filling up of their coal pits, the burning of their ships, and lastly, (to use a new-coined and elegant Scotch phrase) the *starvation* of London, and every town where the meat is roasted, the pot boiled, and the hands warmed with Newcastle coal, must produce. It should be observed, that Sunderland, its quay, its shipping, and its contiguous coal pits, will all, in such an event, share the same fate. I assert, that the fort and battery at Tinmouth, are not equal to the defence of the harbour; from their situation and other circumstances, they must be taken in a few hours. I need not say, that a French engineer will be at no loss on what side to attack them; and it is not by way of exposing the weak parts of our country that I say thus much, but to urge the expedience of strengthening them, and to shew the necessity of giving Lord Percy, at least, ten thousand men to defend the North. I say the North, for the business may be done from Newcastle to Whitehaven, and many miles North and South of each, before the express shall have reached

reached Coxheath and Warley, or a single battalion have made an effectual move from either to prevent it; and let it not be supposed that the French will hesitate to make a push of this sort. Their loss cannot be great, and the damage they may occasion may be infinite; eight thousand landsmen killed or made prisoners; rate them as the Landgrave of Hesse does, 16*l.* a man (which by the by is 15*l.* more than they cost) it is only 128,000*l.* lost to them, if they miscarry; it is a million millions, perhaps, lost to us, if they succeed. What gamester would not play upon such terms? (But now we are upon the price and value of soldiers, I cannot help saying, that I think it should be part of General Faucit's instructions, when he contracts for another drove of Germans, to insist upon an abatement in the price.)

I do not think that the freight and insurance of the above-mentioned body of French troops, from Havre or Dunkirk to the North-east coast of England, would cost a twentieth part of the money as the same number of Hessians or Highlanders exported

ed to America. But it is a mere bluster, under our present apprehensions, to talk of sending armies and fleets abroad; and I wish Ministers to be aware of the consequences of detaching such considerable squadrons as we are doing, whilst England itself is insecure.

Admiral Hughes is about to sail with six sail of the line; and it is said he is to be convoyed 300 leagues to the westward by ten sail more. I hope the remainder of our fleet at Portsmouth and at Plymouth are equal to every effort of the French and Spaniards. It should be a maxim, however, with every wise Minister, as well as with every experienced Admiral and General, to suppose that an enemy *will* actually do what he *may* or *can* do; and under this idea, I would ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether the Brest fleet may not take the advantage of the first south-west wind to anchor along-side our ships at Spithead; and whether, in such a case, most of our ships there might not be sunk, burnt, or taken? (even though the odds are ten to one in our favour.) Whether any number

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ber of transports and troops might not come along with the Brest fleet; whether all the bravery and experience of General Monckton, with the Invalids, and Lincolnshire Militia to back him, are equal to the defence of Portsmouth; whether in any case your docks, storehouses, &c. might not be destroyed; and, if after all, the French might not proceed uninterrupted to the Thames, and the Medway: in short, whether such a coup would not annihilate the naval and commercial strength of this nation. I throw out these ideas, not merely as hints or suggestions of what is within the reach of possibility, but as what I am firmly persuaded will be realised, if there be an enterprizing minister in France; and if he can find an Admiral and a General adequate to the execution of his projects.

But, perhaps, I have exhausted your patience, and spent my own time to no purpose, in dwelling upon a worn-out subject; perhaps I shall be called a seditious, factious, rebellious republican, for having advanced my own opinion, in opposition to that of the Ministry. Be that as it may, I
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do from my heart believe, that the prosecution of this war will be attended with the ruin and downfall of this country; that, instead of recovering North America, we shall lose all of which we are at present possessed there, together with the West-Indies, and all the trade depending upon them; and that we might, by treaty, secure what by an infatuated perseverance in the war we are upon the brink of losing.

I have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your very humble servant,

AN ENGLISHMAN.



